CEDAR POINT: WHO WILL TELL THE TRUTH?; FRANCIS?

[with annotated comments/corrections by "C.P.P.-I.C.", 2025]

This (future) publication will examine various assertions by
"Cedar Point historian" David W. Francis,
(specifically: **'Cedar Point and the Characteristics of American Summer Resorts During the Gilded Age'**, (as published in the Hayes Historical Journal: Volume VII, Number 2; Winter, 1988)**:**

Cedar Point began its development during the summer of 1870 as little more than a crude beer garden and a few bathhouses. [[There is no contemporaneous evidence of any "bathhouses" anywhere on Cedar Point (peninsula) in 1870. However, there had been a couple of prior Cedar Point (peninsula) "bathhouse" enterprises, as early as 1858, but none seem to have been in operation during and after the Civil War, until 1878.]] Because Sandusky's working population had little leisure time, the beer garden operated for only a few hours each evening, although on Sundays the little steamboat Young Reindeer was kept busy all day ferrying hot and thirsty patrons to the peninsula. [[The so-called "Cedar Point Beer Garden" seems to have been a very temporary 'event', that occurred for about a week (or less). The 'Young Reindeer' was mainly a "fishing" charter-boat that additionally took groups to Cedar Point (peninsula) for picnics and *"bathing"*(swimming), including church groups, which obviously were not patrons of the short-lived "Beer Garden". But, no portion of the area which is now 'Cedar Point' resort, was being utilized, until 1883.]] The resort developed very slowly and actually stagnated[?*] during the mid-1870s. [[*> There was no known "resort" business in operation in "the mid-1870s". In '1878', a "bathhouse" business was contemporaneously recorded, but it had no known connection to several later independent "bathhouse" enterprises on the many-miles-long peninsula. (No portion of the area which is now 'Cedar Point' resort, was being utilized, until 1883.)]] During the 1880s, with work schedules reduced and inexpensive railroad excursions available to bring customers from other cities, the outstanding natural beach and the refreshing lake breezes of Cedar Point [[peninsula]] attracted larger crowds. [[Here, Francis totally omits any mention of the 'resort' enterprise which eventually became the 'Cedar Point' of the 21st-Century. That enterprise was begun in 1882, by B.F. Dwelle.]] By the mid[?*]-1880s, a recognizable resort with many buildings and lively attractions had emerged at Cedar Point [[specifically, "Cedar Point Pleasure Resort"]]. Among these structures were a massive "Grand Pavilion" with a stage and seating for 4,000, bowling alleys, a ladies pavilion, a photo studio, a primitive roller coaster, a carousel, additional bathhouses, a water toboggan, and other popular entertainments. [[*> "mid?-1880s"**:** Those mentioned amenities at "Cedar Point Pleasure Resort" were installed in '1888', etc.)]] Due to aggressive competition and the recession of the 1890s, however, Cedar Point's fortunes began to decline. In 1897, the resort company lost money and the future of the operation was in doubt. [[Contemporaneous evidence disputes both of those statements.]] Just at a time when the failure[?] of the resort seemed certain, George A. Boeckling became a major stockholder [[...not until several years after he had been merely "general manager"...]] and general manager of the newly formed Cedar Point Pleasure Resort Company. [[false. The "Cedar Point Pleasure Resort Company" was formed in Dec.1887. (In 1897, that company was "re-formed" as "Cedar Point Pleasure Resort Company of Indiana".) Born in Indiana, Boeckling had worked as an ice box salesman, a wholesale lumber dealer, and a real estate agent. [[... interesting that there is no mention, there, of Boeckling being a "representative" of any railroad company --- perhaps because Boeckling was not one? --- nor were the four share-holders of the '1897' company, who had also been previous owners of the '1887' company. Therefore, if Francis "debunked" that popular 'myth' about any "railroad" company being directly involved in the '1897' enterprise, then why didn't Francis debunk it more succinctly? (And, actual 19th-Century evidence indicates that every railroad with Sandusky connections, was already doing nearly a full-capacity of "C. P." business, the year prior to Boeckling's involvement as its 'manager' in 1898.]]

{ Other "Cedar Point" publications by David W. Francis,
will be evaluated in the finalized version of this critique. }

See the additional (free) "C.P.P.-I.C." publications in this
"WHO WILL TELL THE TRUTH" series, at archive.org